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Norman Ken Ouchi

Solectron 721

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09/11/2006

Robert Moll
1173 St. Charles Court
Los Altos, CA 94024

EXAMINER

NEURAUTER, GEORGE C

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2143

DATE MAILED: 09/11/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/037,545	OUCHI ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	George C. Neurauter, Jr.	2143	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 May 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 and 15-30 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 and 15-30 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

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DETAILED ACTION

Claims 1-12 and 15-30 are currently presented and have been examined.

The Applicant's reply to the requirement under 37 CFR 1.105 is considered to be a complete reply.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 19 May 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

The Applicant argues that "Project 2000" does not disclose a form route manager with the functions as recited within the claims. The Examiner is not persuaded by these remarks. "Project 2000" discloses that, which further distinguish the citations as previously put forth by the Examiner, a MAPI-compliant email system includes the mail server known in the art as Exchange (see page 497, "Communicating with a Workgroup by Email"). The route or "routing slip" as shown in "Project 2000" contains a step-by-step sequence of email addresses wherein a email is sent to initiate workflow on the route or "A routing slip allows you to circulate the same project file from one recipient to another...The initial sender designates an order in which the file is to be circulated...No recipient receives the file until the previous recipient; eventually, the file is sent back to the originator." (see page 509, "Using the Routing Slip").

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Therefore, since "Project 2000" expressly discloses that emails are exchanged in an ordered circular pattern between users and that the users actively use email to forward the email to other users and the email is sent to the next recipient, the recited steps of receiving the email, comparing a step field of the email with the route, defining the next email address based on the comparison, updating the email address to the next email address, updating the step field to the next step, and sending the email to the next address is accomplished by the mail server Exchange as disclosed in "Project 2000". While these steps are not expressly disclosed within the teachings of "Project 2000", in order for the email to be circulated in the manner as shown in "Project 2000", these recited step must be accomplished otherwise the method of sending the email messages according to the route would not occur. Therefore, these limitations are inherent within the teachings of "Project 2000" since these limitations necessarily flow and are present within the teachings of "Project 2000" on the basis that one of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that the methods would not operate if the limitations were not performed.

The Examiner has also cited some relevant prior art which also disclose similar teachings to those argued. The Applicant

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is invited to consider these references when responding to this Office Action.

Specification

The specification is objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. See 37 CFR 1.75(d)(1) and MPEP § 608.01(o). Correction of the following is required: The limitations regarding the sequencer and its associated operations should be incorporated into the specification as appropriate. See also MPEP 2163.06, paragraph III and *In re Benno*, 768 F.2d 1340, 226 USPQ 683 (Fed. Cir. 1985).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-12 and 15-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by "Teach Yourself Microsoft Project 2000 in 24 hours" ("Project 2000"). See also MPEP 2133.01 and *Paperless Accounting v. Bay Area Rapid Transit System*, 804 F.2d 659, 665, 231 USPQ 649, 653 (Fed. Cir. 1986).

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Regarding claim 1, "Project 2000" discloses a workflow project management system, comprising a form route manager ("Messaging Application Programming Interface email system" which includes "Outlook" and "Exchange"; page 497, specifically the paragraph beginning "To communicate by email...") for receiving and sending email according to a route ("routing slip"), the route comprising a step-by-step sequence of email addresses (page 509, specifically "The initial sender designates an order in which the file is to be circulated..." and "Choose One after Another to have the file travel sequentially to each recipient"), communicating with a project management system ("Project 2000"), wherein the form route manager includes an in-box adapted to receive email; a first sequencer adapted to as follows: compare a step field ("sequence number") of the email with the route, define the next email address based on the compare, update the email address to the next email address, update the step field to the next step; and an out-box adapted to send mail to the next email address (page 509, "Using the Routing Slip", specifically "A routing slip allows you to circulate the same project file from one recipient to another...The initial sender designates an order in which the file is to be circulated...No recipient receives the file until the previous recipient; eventually, the file is sent back to the

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originator."), wherein the project management system sends a message at a project segment to the form route manager to initiate workflow on the route. ("routing slip"; page 509-510, specifically "Using the Routing Slip", more specifically "To send a Project file using a routing slip, follow these steps..."; page 510, Figure 23.9)

Regarding claim 2, "Project 2000" discloses a workflow project management system, comprising a form route manager ("Messaging Application Programming Interface email system" which includes "Outlook" and "Exchange"; page 497, specifically the paragraph beginning "To communicate by email...") for receiving and sending email according to a route ("routing slip"), the route comprising a step-by-step sequence of email addresses (page 509, specifically "The initial sender designates an order in which the file is to be circulated..." and "Choose One after Another to have the file travel sequentially to each recipient"), and communicating with a project management system ("Project 2000"), wherein the form route manager includes an in-box adapted to receive email; a first sequencer adapted to as follows: compare a step filed of the email with the route, define the next email address based on the compare, update the email address to the next email address, update the step field to the next step; and an out-box adapted to send mail to the

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next email address (page 509, "Using the Routing Slip", specifically "A routing slip allows you to circulate the same project file from one recipient to another...The initial sender designates an order in which the file is to be circulated...No recipient receives the file until the previous recipient; eventually, the file is sent back to the originator."), wherein the form route manager sends a message to the project management system at a project segment. (page 509-510, specifically "Using the Routing Slip", more specifically "eventually, the file is sent back to the originator")

Regarding claim 3, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 1 or 2, wherein the message includes the time the message was sent (page 501, Figure 23.2, "Date").

Regarding claim 4, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 1 or 2, wherein the message contains a segment identifier. ("Task Name"; page 501, Figure 23.2)

Regarding claim 5, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 1 or 2, wherein a workflow route is associated with a project segment. (page 500, specifically "When team members have been assigned to tasks in a

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project, the team members must be notified of those assignments.")

Regarding claim 6, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 2, wherein the project management system calculates the project schedule based on the message. (page 500, specifically "the manager opens the response and updates the project with the team member's response"; page 505, specifically "A workgroup member can send a status update on any task assigned to him or her, whether or not the manager has requested a TeamStatus report")

Regarding claim 7, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 1 or 2, wherein the message is an email message. (page 497, specifically "Communicating with a Workgoup by Email")

Regarding claim 8, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 1 or 2, wherein a workflow is initiated when a project segment is initiated or completed. (page 500, specifically "When team members have been assigned to tasks in a project, the team members must be notified of those assignments.")

Regarding claim 9, "Project 2000" discloses a workflow project management system comprising a form route manager ("Messaging.Application Programming Interface email system"

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which includes "Outlook" and "Exchange"; page 497, specifically the paragraph beginning "To communicate by email...") for receiving and sending email according to a route ("routing slip"), the route comprising a step-by-step sequence of email addresses (page 509, specifically "The initial sender designates an order in which the file is to be circulated..." and "Choose One after Another to have the file travel sequentially to each recipient"), comparing a step field of the email with the route to determine if the email is at the last step in the route, and if so, deleting the email, and if not, setting the step field in the email to the next step in the route and the email address to the email address of the next step in the route (page 509, "Using the Routing Slip", specifically "A routing slip allows you to circulate the same project file from one recipient to another...The initial sender designates an order in which the file is to be circulated...No recipient receives the file until the previous recipient..."; Examiner's note: note that deletion of the email may be done by the originator when the email comes back or by the form route manager if the "Return When Done" check box is not checked), and communicating with a calendar system containing a list of events, and wherein the list of events is initiated at a time set in the calendar system. (page 92, specifically "Project is a scheduling tool"; page 93,

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specifically "Microsoft Project bases its schedule for tasks on the working days and times defined in a base calendar to which the project is linked"; page 508, specifically "Microsoft Project tasks can be integrated into your Microsoft Outlook task list...Reminders of upcoming dates and deadlines can be set for Project/Outlook tasks")

Regarding claim 10, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 9, wherein the form route manager sends a message to set or change or delete a time in the calendar system. (page 93, specifically "Microsoft Project bases its schedule for tasks on the working days and times defined in a base calendar to which the project is linked"; page 500, specifically "the manager opens the response and updates the project with the team member's response" and "When team members have been assigned to tasks in a project, the team members must be notified of those assignments."; page 505, specifically "A workgroup member can send a status update on any task assigned to him or her, whether or not the manager has requested a TeamStatus report"; page 508, specifically "Microsoft Project tasks can be integrated into your Microsoft Outlook task list...Reminders of upcoming dates and deadlines can be set for Project/Outlook tasks")

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Regarding claim 11, "Project 2000" discloses a workflow project management system, comprising a form route manager ("Messaging Application Programming Interface email system" which includes "Outlook" and "Exchange"; page 497, specifically the paragraph beginning "To communicate by email...") containing a route ("routing slip"), the route comprising a step-by-step sequence of email addresses (page 509, specifically "The initial sender designates an order in which the file is to be circulated..." and "Choose One after Another to have the file travel sequentially to each recipient"), comparing a step field of the email with the route to determine if the email is at the last step in the route, and is so, deleting the email, and if not, setting the step field in the email to the next step in the route and the email address to the email address of the next step in the route (page 509, "Using the Routing Slip", specifically "A routing slip allows you to circulate the same project file from one recipient to another...The initial sender designates an order in which the file is to be circulated...No recipient receives the file until the previous recipient..."; Examiner's note: note that deletion of the email may be done by the originator when the email comes back or by the form route manager if the "Return When Done" check box is not checked), and communicating with a project management system ("Project 2000"),

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wherein the project management system sends a message to the form route manager to initiate the workflow on the route comprising setting an indicator of the workflow route in a message and sending the message to the form route manager. (page 509-510, specifically "Using the Routing Slip", more specifically "To send a Project file using a routing slip, follow these steps..."; page 510, Figure 23.9)

Regarding claim 12, "Project 2000" discloses a workflow project management system comprising a form route manager ("Messaging Application Programming Interface" which includes "Outlook"; page 497, specifically the paragraph beginning "To communicate by email...") containing a route ("routing slip"), the route comprising a step-by-step sequence of email addresses (page 509, specifically "The initial sender designates an order in which the file is to be circulated..." and "Choose One after Another to have the file travel sequentially to each recipient"), and communicating with a project management system ("Project 2000") containing project segments wherein the form route manager determine if the email is at the last step in the route, and if so, deletes the email, and if not, sets the step field in the email to the next step in the route and the email address to the email address of the next step in the route (page 509, "Using the Routing Slip", specifically "A routing slip

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allows you to circulate the same project file from one recipient to another...The initial sender designates an order in which the file is to be circulated...No recipient receives the file until the previous recipient..."; Examiner's note: note that deletion of the email may be done by the form route manager if the "Return When Done" check box is not checked), and sets an indicator to the step of the route and sends a message to update the project management system when the step of the route completes. (page 509-510, specifically "Using the Routing Slip", more specifically "eventually, the file is sent back to the originator")

Regarding claim 15, "Project 2000" discloses a workflow project management system, wherein the system is connected to a computer network and an email system, wherein the email includes a step field and a document, comprising a form route manager ("Messaging Application Programming Interface" which includes "Outlook"; page 497, specifically the paragraph beginning "To communicate by email..."), with an email address, connected to the computer network, capable of accessing a route ("routing slip"), a sequence of email addresses in the computer network (page 509, specifically "The initial sender designates an order in which the file is to be circulated..." and "Choose One after Another to have the file travel sequentially to each

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recipient"), comprising an in-box adapted to receive email; a first sequencer adapted to as follows compare the step field with the route, define the next email address based on the compare, update the email address to the next email address, update the step field to the next step, an out-box adapted to send email to the next email address, wherein the next mail address includes an in-box adapted to receive email from the form route manager, and an out-box adapted to send email to the form route manager ("Messaging Application Programming Interface email system" which includes "Outlook" and "Exchange"; page 497, specifically the paragraph beginning "To communicate by email..."; page 509, "Using the Routing Slip", specifically "A routing slip allows you to circulate the same project file from one recipient to another...The initial sender designates an order in which the file is to be circulated...No recipient receives the file until the previous recipient..."), wherein the form route manager sends a message to a project management system containing project segments, and after comparing the step field to the route, determines if the indicator is set, and if set, sends a message to the project management system. (page 509-510, specifically "Using the Routing Slip", more specifically "To send a Project file using a routing slip, follow these steps..."; page 510, Figure 23.9)

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Regarding claim 16, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 15, wherein the message contains the time when the message was sent. (page 501, Figure 23.2, "Date")

Regarding claim 17, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 15, wherein the address in the route includes a project segment identifier. ("Task Name"; page 501, Figure 23.2)

Regarding claim 18, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 17, wherein the message contains the project segment identifier. ("Task Name"; page 501, Figure 23.2)

Regarding claim 19, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 15, wherein the project management system contains project segments and relates a project segment to an email based workflow route. (page 500, specifically "When team members have been assigned to tasks in a project, the team members must be notified of those assignments.")

Regarding claim 20, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 15, wherein the project management system at the beginning of a project segment sends an email to the form route manager to initiate a workflow route.

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(page 500, specifically "When team members have been assigned to tasks in a project, the team members must be notified of those assignments.")

Regarding claim 21, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 15, wherein the project management system at the end of a project segment sends an email to the form route manager to initiate a workflow route. (page 500, specifically "When team members have been assigned to tasks in a project, the team members must be notified of those assignments."; page 505, specifically "A workgroup member can send a status update on any task assigned to him or her, whether or not the manager has requested a TeamStatus report")

Regarding claim 22, "Project 2000" discloses a workflow project management system, comprising a calendar system containing calendar events and a form route manager for receiving and sending a message along a route of computer addresses in a computer network ("Messaging Application Programming Interface email system" which includes "Outlook" and "Exchange"; page 497, specifically the paragraph beginning "To communicate by email..."), wherein the form route manager compares a step field in the message with the route, defines the next computer address based on the compare, updates the computer address to the next computer address in the route, updates the

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step field to the next step (page 509, "Using the Routing Slip", specifically "A routing slip allows you to circulate the same project file from one recipient to another...The initial sender designates an order in which the file is to be circulated...No recipient receives the file until the previous recipient...") and communicates with the calendar system, wherein the computer address has an indicator defining that a message is to be sent to the calendar system, and the form route manager is adapted to after comparing the step field to the route determine if the indicator is set, and if set, send a message to the calendar system. (page 92, specifically "Project is a scheduling tool"; page 93, specifically "Microsoft Project bases its schedule for tasks on the working days and times defined in a base calendar to which the project is linked"; page 508, specifically "Microsoft Project tasks can be integrated into your Microsoft Outlook task list...Reminders of upcoming dates and deadlines can be set for Project/Outlook tasks")

Regarding claim 23, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 22, wherein the message is an email. (page 497, specifically "Communicating with a Workgoup by Email")

Regarding claim 24, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 22, wherein the message

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contains the time when the message was sent. (page 501, Figure 23.2, "Date")

Regarding claim 25, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 22, wherein the computer address in the route includes a calendar event identifier. (page 508, specifically "Microsoft Project tasks can be integrated into your Microsoft Outlook task list...")

Regarding claim 26, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 22, wherein the message contains the calendar event identifier. (page 508, specifically "Microsoft Project tasks can be integrated into your Microsoft Outlook task list...")

Regarding claim 27, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 22, wherein the message is used to add, modify, or delete a calendar event. (page 93, specifically "Microsoft Project bases its schedule for tasks on the working days and times defined in a base calendar to which the project is linked"; page 508, specifically "Microsoft Project tasks can be integrated into your Microsoft Outlook task list...Reminders of upcoming dates and deadlines can be set for Project/Outlook tasks")

Regarding claim 28, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 22, wherein the calendar

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system contains calendar events and relates a calendar event with an email-based workflow route. (page 93, specifically "Microsoft Project bases its schedule for tasks on the working days and times defined in a base calendar to which the project is linked")

Regarding claim 29, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 22, wherein the calendar system at the beginning of a specific calendar event sends an email to the form route manager to initiate a workflow route.

Regarding claim 30, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 22, wherein the calendar system at the end of a specific calendar event sends an email to the form route manager to initiate a workflow route. (page 500, specifically "When team members have been assigned to tasks in a project, the team members must be notified of those assignments."; page 505, specifically "A workgroup member can send a status update on any task assigned to him or her, whether or not the manager has requested a TeamStatus report")

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is

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reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to George C. Neurauter, Jr. whose telephone number is (571) 272-3918. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 9AM to 5:30PM Eastern.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Wiley can be reached on (571) 272-3923. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

gcn



JEFFREY PWU
PRIMARY EXAMINER